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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES 26 February 1974

ROMANIA

Bucharest Mayor Gets Award, Reiterates Early Plan Fulfillment Pledge

The presentation of the order of "23 August"--the country's third highest award--to Bucharest Mayor Gheorghe Cioara last Saturday tends to undercut recent rumors that he is in trouble. For instance, Embassy Bucharest recently reported Cioara was rumored to be under fire for doing badly on his pledge that Bucharest would fulfill the goals of the five year plan in four and a half years. At the award ceremony last Saturday, Cioara reiterated that pledge in front of Ceausescu and other major Romanian leaders. In addition, some observers have speculated that Cioara's failure could also affect the position of Ceausescu who is himself committed to an early plan fulfillment. The Romanian President, however, continues to demonstrate confidence.

In an interview with a French journalist on February 4, Ceausescu stated that "the envisioned high growth rate for 1974 insures the achievement of the five year plan in a shorter time than initially envisioned."

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YUGOSLAVIA

More on "Centralist Faction" in Croatia

Well-placed, local party officials in Croatia have told the US Consul General in Zagreb that the current drive against a "centralist faction" is aimed at removing "unreliable" people from party, government and economic-commercial positions. These "errant" individuals allegedly support Djilas, Rankovic, the "new left," and Croat nationalism. The "faction" also includes those economic managers, who have shown little enthusiasm for implementing self-management agreements. The sources claims that these "forces" are unorganized and that no current high-level leaders are to be found in the faction.

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State Dept. review completed

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Party leaders appear especially concerned that such non-conformist individuals, who hold either middle or lower level positions, will be able to hold onto their jobs during the confusion of upcoming elections and preparations for federal and republic party congresses. They admit that the new and complicated constitution is not well understood by the average citizen and that the party must therefore take the lead in resolving cadre questions in all spheres of social life. This will be a demanding and confusing task since the Croat party itself is not unified on its future course.

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BULGARIA

New Ambassador to the FRG

Bulgaria has requested agreement for Petur Mezhdurechski to be its first Ambassador to West Germany. Mezhdurechski, probably in his late thirties or early forties, is intelligent and gregarious, with a cheerful disposition, and he comes from the Macedonian area of Bulgaria. He is not known to have any previous diplomatic experience. Mezhdurechski lived in West Germany in the mid-fifties, when his father served as deputy chief of the Bulgarian trade mission in Frankfurt. He later attended a foreign trade school in East Berlin for two years before he transferred to the Free University of West Berlin to study political science in 1958.

Bulgaria and West Germany officially established diplomatic relations in December 1973. Bonn's Ambassador to Bulgaria, Fritz Menne, presented his credentials on January 31.

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POLAND

Don't Look Back

The 30th Anniversary of the Polish People's Republic, which falls in July 1974, is not to be a "big gala" but rather a moment for the "affirmation of Polish dynamism," according to Trybuna Ludu, the official party daily. The commentary notes

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that the party central committee, under the rubric "30th Anniversary Theses," has recently laid down a series of arduous tasks. For example, in the next twenty years the housing problem is to be completely resolved, with each family having its own flat. Farmers are to double production over the next two decades. Secondary school education should be almost universally available by 1990. And, national income in 1990 is projected at four times the present figure. Overall goals are in fact set so high as to lead to only one logical conclusion: that now is the time to get on with the building of a more perfect socialist Poland.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Not Happy, But Still an Anniversary

Party and government leaders yesterday observed the 26th anniversary of the Communist takeover, otherwise known as "the February victory of the Czechoslovak working people." The leaders laid a wreath at the grave of Klement Gottwald, "the first working-class president," and held a rally in Prague's old town square. What happened in 1948, explains Rude Pravo, is that the "working class fought a fierce battle with the reactionary bourgeoisie," who failed completely and were defeated. The Communist Party has "secured unprecedented prosperity, national and state independence for this country."

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